

Tips for Working with Your

Local Official

Get a Radon Proclamation in Your Area

An official proclamation can be used to attract media attention when the governor, mayor, or other state or local official endorses observance of National Radon Action Month. Here are some tips for working with your local official to sign and promote a radon proclamation in your area:

- ▶ Contact your mayor's or governor's office to determine how the official issues proclamations and identify the appropriate contact person. You may learn that the process takes a few months or that the official has a specific proclamation schedule. Be sure to call a few months in advance so that you can get your proclamation on the schedule in January.
- ▶ Contact your state radon program office to find out if they have already requested a proclamation. If the state has already coordinated a governor's proclamation, you can leverage it to encourage your local officials to do the same.
- ▶ Write a proclamation for your local official. You can use the sample template on page 32. Include information about radon, local statistics, and other community activities during National Radon Action Month.
- ▶ Send a proclamation request letter to the appropriate person in the official's office along with the proclamation. Use the request letter template provided on page 31 to get started on your letter.
- ▶ Follow-up with the official's office after sending your letter. You may need to call a few times to check on the status of your proclamation request.
- ▶ Coordinate a proclamation signing ceremony with your government official and invite the public and stakeholders such as local health programs and community activists.
- ▶ Use the proclamation to attract media coverage during National Radon Action Month. Issue a press release to get media attention for the proclamation and invite the media to the proclamation signing ceremony or other related events.
- ▶ Get permission from your official's office to post the proclamation in public places such as bulletin boards in local schools, hardware stores, real estate offices, and other relevant venues where you can attract attention for radon issues during January.

Successful Partnering Approaches to Promote Radon Awareness

To promote the 2008 National Radon Action Month, Cindy Ladage and her team at the Illinois Emergency Management Association (IEMA) partnered with the American Lung Association of Illinois (ALA) and the American Respiratory Health Association (ARHA). The team coordinated a very successful series of activities to raise awareness of radon risk and promote free radon test kits.

The Illinois Radon Awareness Act went into effect January 1, 2008; just in time to pique media and consumer interest in radon risk awareness during National Radon Action Month. The governor announced the new law as he issued the proclamation, drawing even more attention to January efforts.

IEMA hosted four continuing education courses for real estate agents, utilizing its partnership with the Association of Realtors to create a curriculum, get it approved for continuing education credits, and promote the courses to Illinois realtors. The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) approached IEMA to create a course focusing on radon and radon-resistant building. Cindy and her team presented this course to employees of the construction and demolition industry, home inspectors, developers, realtors, code officials, and property managers.

Cindy and the ALA also presented radon risk information and gave away test kits to EPA Region 5 and ALA employees. She and her partners conducted a media campaign on the distribution of free radon test kits during January and sent a press release that was picked up by local newspapers, magazines, retiree publications, and others. ARHA worked with its news media contacts to publish coupons for free test kits from IEMA, receiving attention in markets of over nine million such as Chicago.

The results were astounding! In January, the IEMA distributed over 8,000 test kits. So many test kits were requested, IEMA was backlogged until February when they distributed another 8,000 test kits and in March, over 7,000. IEMA has distributed more than 33,000 radon test kits to date in 2008.